



...teaching excellence through dance!

The Dedicated Dancer

S.O.D.A. Policies and Procedures

A Handbook for both Parents and Students

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We welcome you to Stone Oak Dance Academy. We are so glad you chose SODA and want your dance experience to be its best! Our faculty and staff are committed to providing the finest quality of training in an environment that is nurturing, challenging, and disciplined. Our goal is to educate the mind, body, and soul of each of our students. We believe that our success comes as a result of quality training and passion, by staying true to the traditions of dance as an art form. At SODA, we don't teach them a dance, we teach them how to dance. We believe in education and teaching them skills that will last a lifetime. Our dance classes give each student confidence that instills pride, and a higher self-esteem.

About this Handbook

We have created this handbook to offer our dancers and their parents a clear understanding of the commitment and responsibility that is required to train at Stone Oak Dance Academy. All students and parents are required to abide by the rules, guidelines and regulations outlined within this handbook. It is the responsibility of every parent and dancer to read and understand this handbook.

To The Parent

SODA relies on a positive atmosphere for our faculty, dancers and their parents. Our program promotes a positive learning experience for all participants. We believe that the dancer's success depends on the support of their parents or guardians. Your commitment to the process makes an enormous difference; we encourage you to be a supportive part of your child's dance education.

To The Student

Students are expected to treat Stone Oak Dance Academy's Faculty, Staff and Peers with respect and a positive attitude. Dance class is not a time for socialization, it is a time for focus, dedication and education. Excessive talking is distracting and disrespectful to the teachers and classmates.

Student Division Commitment Agreement

All students at SODA who are enrolled in the Student Division, commit to a full school year of classes or an 8-week Summer Session of classes. The School Session at SODA begins in August and ends in May with our Annual Performance. SODA works on a full-year syllabus within each of its classes, making it imperative for students (and parents) to commit to enrollment for an entire school year. Tuition is based on the total program and divided into monthly installments (see TUITION section below).

Tuition and Payments

School Session Tuition is based on the entire session and divided into monthly installments. Tuition is due on the 1st of each month, not the first class of each month. Summer and Special Program Tuition is payable at registration. We can set up Automatic Billing with a Debit or Credit Card. If you prefer you can pay monthly via CASH or CHECK due by the 1st of each month, but a valid Credit Card must be on file and will be charged if tuition is not received by the 1st. There is a \$20 Late Fee for payments not received by the 1st of the month. There is a \$35 fee for returned checks and Automatic Billing payments declined due to insufficient funds or expired cards.

Drop Policy

Enrollment in classes is based on the SEASON (School Year: Aug-May; Summer: June-Aug, or Special Session) In special circumstances where a student needs to drop before the end of their commitment, the parent must send a letter to be reviewed by the Director. Requests are only considered from date letter is received. Letters are accepted in person only. There is a \$50 drop fee for each class dropped prior to the end of the commitment. The registration fee and any other pre-paid fees are non-refundable. Requests made due to medical problems or family relocations must be submitted in writing. Doctor's notes required for all medical problem.

Student Dress Code

Students are required to have the proper dress code for all classes attended at SODA. Why a dress code? A dress code ensures that a teacher will be able to see a dancer's alignment and positioning. The teacher needs to be able to see a dancer's mistakes. Baggy clothing can mask bad habits, making corrections impossible. A dress code will also teach students discipline, helping with overall focus and energy. By "dressing the part," dancers feel like dancers. Dress codes can also create unity among the dancers instead of causing a few dancers to stand out, much like a school uniform policy. Dress codes go a long way in minimizing distractions, and help give classes a unified look. Aside from proper dance attire, girls should wear their hair neatly pulled off the face in a bun for all classes. FOR DANCERS HEALTH AND SAFETY, NO OUTSIDE SHOES PERMITTED FOR USE IN A DANCE CLASS. NO EXCEPTIONS. DANCE SHOES ARE NOT TO BE WORN OUTSIDE. Complete dress code requirements can be found at www.StoneOakDanceAcademy.com. We partner with Dorothy's Dance Shop for all your dress code needs. If you have any questions, please consult the website or contact the SODA Office.

Class Placement

It is our policy to offer appropriate opportunities and class placement to every student. Each student's class placement is highly individualized each year. Our decisions regarding each dancer is carefully examined and made with expertise from having years of training and experience. Proper placement ensures the dancer's safety and will enrich the dancer's training experience. Final decisions in regards to your child's dance training and placement will be made by your child's teachers and the Director. Any questions in regards to your child's training and placement should be directed to the Director, Kelsea Kaplan.

Level Requirements

As a student progresses, he or she is required to enroll in multiple classes in the same genre of dance per week. This is imperative for the dancer's training and wellbeing. Multiple classes a week help reiterate the movement and techniques within the body so that it becomes part of their muscle memory. Dancers not enrolled and participating in the required number of classes tend to progress at a different pace than dancers enrolled in the correct number of classes.

Pointe and Pre-Pointe Work

Students are not considered ready for pointe work until they have been studying classical ballet for three or more years, with a frequency of two or more classes per week. All of this requires careful evaluation on the part of the teacher and Director. Once a dancer is ready, a recommendation letter will be given to each student and a copy will be kept in their student file. No one will be allowed to register for a pointe or pre-pointe class without this letter. Students who have been recommended for pointe or pre-pointe work should not purchase pointe shoes until notified by their teacher. Students should expect to begin the first year of pointe training in ballet shoes.

Attendance

Absences must be reported to the office prior to class time. If an absence is not reported it will be considered unexcused. The dancer's presence at all classes is imperative. The spirit of teamwork and the lesson of dedication are a big part of our school's educational process. Good attendance is critical to consistent progress and advancement. Students missing an excessive amount of classes during the year will not advance. We encourage each child to make up any class that is an excused absence. No student is permitted to make up in a class more advanced than their registered class. Make up classes must be scheduled within the same month as the class missed. Also, students entering class ten minutes late will be asked to observe class for that day. Injuries can result when a student has not had a proper warm up.

Injuries, Illness & Allergies

Please inform your instructor of any health problems your child may have. Your signature on the registration

form is certification of your child's ability to participate in his/her dance class. Please inform your child's instructor of any previous injuries or physical limitations. Students who are injured and unable to participate are asked to come and observe class. Observing class is important to the development of the students dance education. Once a student has stopped participating in class they may not resume class at any point. Students must be fever free for at least 24 hours before they are allowed to return to their scheduled class.

Class Pick up

Parents must be prompt when picking up their child or carpool. Please call the office if you are running late. After an initial warning, parents that are repeatedly late will be charged at a fee of \$15.00 per 15 minutes. We prefer parents pick up their children from the studio lobby. If you would like to allow your child to be released from the lobby to meet you downstairs, you must fill out a Release Permission Form and have it on file with studio. Remember, students should never leave the studio wearing dance shoes and should always "Cover Up" with a skirt, pants, or the like.

Annual Recital

Stone Oak Dance Academy will hold an annual end of year performance in May. While participation is optional, we highly encourage ALL STUDENTS to participate as this is an integral part of your child's dance education. All accounts must be paid in full by May 1 in order to participate in the performances, NO EXCEPTIONS. Any registrations received after the December cutoff date will not be guaranteed a costume or participation in the performance. After Spring Break, students are not permitted to miss more than 1 class in order to participate in the performance. No refunds or credits will be given if a student is asked not to participate due to lack of attendance or is unable to participate for any reason. On even years, the Annual Recital will be a fully costumed show. On odd years, the Annual Recital will be a showcase of works performed in their Dress Code Attire. Both will be held on a professional stage.

If you are a parent of a younger dance student

Please make sure that your child visits the restroom BEFORE CLASS! (even if they don't need to!) Although occasionally inevitable, restroom breaks disrupt a class - especially of younger children. When one says they need to go, they all do. IMPORTANT!!! It is tempting as a parent, to want to discipline your child when you observe them misbehave in dance class. PLEASE DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR AND DISCIPLINE YOUR CHILD or any other interjection to the class. It is disruptive to the other students and actually TAKES AWAY authority from the teacher. Our instructors all use warnings and "time-out." If inappropriate behavior continues after these consequences, or the child refuses to dance, it may be then necessary to ask the child to leave class in order to continue to serve the other students.

Lobby Etiquette

Please remain quiet while waiting in the lobby. Step outside if you must talk on your cell phone. Non-dancing children must be supervised at all times.

All-School Etiquette

- **Please turn off all cell phones when entering SODA**
- **All waiting areas must be kept quiet.**
- **No running in the hallways or studios.**
- **No cell phones in the studios.**

Food

If your child needs a snack between multiple classes, please provide them with a healthy alternative. As a reminder, there is no eating in any of the studios. No candy or soda water. We ask parents to refrain from bringing food into the lobby area as well.

Class Cancellations

Stone Oak Dance Academy follows the Comal Independent School District Calendar of Closings with a few exceptions that are highlighted on the SODA Calendar. We will also keep parents apprised of the schedule on our website, parent portals, and through email.

Program Cancellation Policy

Stone Oak Dance Academy reserves the right to cancel any class or program due to lack of enrollment.

Stone Oak Dance Academy Correspondence

We try to do all correspondence via EMAIL. Information will also be posted on our website at www.StoneOakDanceAcademy.com and on the Stone Oak Dance Academy FaceBook page. All inquiries and questions should be directed to stoneoakdanceacademy@gmail.com. As a reminder, all statements, confirmations, and class information, will be **emailed** to the registered email address. Please update your email address as needed.

Teacher Contact and Meetings

Parent-teacher conferences will be held as necessary. If you would like to request to meet with your child's teacher, please schedule the meeting through the office. Most of our teachers are teaching back to back classes, so please do not try to talk to your child's teacher in-between classes. The office staff is highly qualified to answer many of your questions, so do not hesitate to ask them first.

Parent Observation

Parents may watch their child's class from our lobby via our TV monitors. Parents are not allowed to watch in the studio. The training process is sensitive and your presence may distract or inhibit other students; especially younger students. In-Studio Parent Class Participation occurs at specific times throughout the year. The dates for Parent Participation Day will be posted and emails sent out in advance. Please plan to stay for the entire class period. No flash photography is permitted. All cell-phones and pagers must be turned to silent or turned off. Show your dancer support by giving them your full attention and encouragement. Parent Participation Day is for Parent or Adult Guardian ONLY. Please do not bring siblings or friends to Parent Participation Day.

Lost and Found

Items left in the studio, restrooms, or hallways will be collected and placed in the lost and found located at the front desk. Anything remaining in the Lost and Found will be donated or discarded the first Friday of each month. We encourage all students to write their name or initials in all of their belongings. Stone Oak Dance Academy is not responsible for lost or stolen articles. Students are encouraged not to bring valuable items or jewelry to the studio. All students will take their dance bag with them into class. Stone Oak Dance Academy does not tolerate theft in any way.

Stone Oak Dance Company (Competition Team)

Stone Oak Dance Academy offers membership by audition only into the Stone Oak Dance Company (Competition Team). More information about the Company and audition requirements can be found on the website.

Changes to the Handbook

Any necessary additions, omissions, or other changes to this handbook will be emailed to parents of all registered students if they become necessary.